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Thoughts from here and there.

The Seven Levels of Prayer (Part 1)

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In the last few weeks I have been teaching on the topic of prayer. With each lesson in the series, God has opened up our spiritual eyes and taken us to a new level of understanding. The next few posts will have to do with this series that I call, “**The Seven Levels of Prayer.**”

The Book of Acts confirms that one of the keys (perhaps the most important one) to fruitful evangelism, personal renewal, and overall success and effectiveness in ministry is fervent prayer. When they wanted to see souls saved and lives changed, the early church prayed. When they wanted to minister to the needs of people with supernatural power and effectiveness, they prayed. When they needed miraculous provision, they prayed. In fact, whenever they faced personal or corporate challenges (when their pastor, Peter, was in prison) that required God’s intervention, they prayed...and God answered! And today, 2,000 years later, prayer remains the key!

A rose is beautiful to behold. Its redness surrounded by hues of green, capture our attention. That beauty is made possible though by what happens underneath in the dirt, mud, and muck. Out of sight there is a working dimension that makes the beauty of the rose possible. Without it there would be no rose. The beauty of revival, personal spiritual growth, miracles, and church growth are all made possible by the underground reality of consistent prayer and fasting.

A few months ago God began to deal with me about prayer, and in particular, my personal prayer life. I admit I was not as “prayer conditioned” as I should’ve been. I began a journey that opened up a whole new perspective on prayer and has altered the landscape of my walk with God.

My personal revelation began during my nightly walk around my neighborhood. I started praying, asking God to speak to me and teach me how to be an effective disciple of prayer. My normal three mile walk/jog turned into six and this series is the result.

I am very careful when I say God told me something but I sincerely believe that He spoke to me in a very clear way, and told me that there are levels of prayer. In the next few minutes of my “prayer walk” I typed into the notepad on my iphone the following seven levels of prayer:

Level 1: Acknowledge & surrender

Level 2: Repent & forgive

Level 3: Petition

Level 4: Praise & worship (stage 1)

Level 5: Intercession

Level 6: Holy Spirit intercession

Level 7: Worship (stage 2)

The He then took me to a very familiar passage of scripture found in **Matthew 6:**

⁹*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*¹⁰*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*¹¹*Give us this day our daily bread.*¹²*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*¹³*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (KJV)*

Let's take a really close look at "The Lord's Prayer." Jesus told His disciples to pray in this manner (He didn't say, "Pray this," He said to "pray like this"), and then He prayed a very simple prayer that began with "*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name.*"



(<https://damarker.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/surrender.jpeg>) Level 1 of prayer is where we acknowledge Him as our heavenly Father. Over the years I have heard taught that the first step to prayer is praise. Although praise is part of level 1, there is a deeper meaning than what "praise" in and of itself can deliver. On level 1 we must have a deep appreciation for God as our Father. Here we say to Him that we know He is our provider, our protector, our security. We recognize on this level that it is, "*...in Him that we live, and move, and have our being...*" (Acts 17:28)

Next, Jesus says, "*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.*" This is the

surrender part. On level 1 we acknowledge how we perceive Him and then we surrender to His will and His way. "Lord, whatever You are thinking in heaven, let it happen in me on earth." Here we totally surrender our lives and wills to Him.

The next part of the prayer seems out of place because Jesus requests, "*Give us this day our daily bread.*" This seems to be a petition, but petition doesn't happen till the third level and we're still on level 1. So, I ask God about this. His answer was really cool. He let me know that as long as I honored Him as my heavenly Father, He would supply all my daily needs and requirements. One of the benefits of level 1 is I will always have food, clothing and shelter just because He is my Father! One can even be a prodigal and still enjoy the benefits of level 1 as long as they honor God as their heavenly Father.

In Luke 11:2-3 from the MESSAGE this portion of the Lord's Prayer is interpreted as follows:

"Father, Reveal who you are. Set the world right. Keep us alive with three square meals."

Just as there are benefits at level one, there can be a danger there as well. Some people "camp out" at level 1 because they are content with just having their daily needs supplied. Some even look at the provisions of level 1 as being a stamp of God's approval of their lifestyle. This is not the case. There comes a time when a person must realize that maturity requires responsibility and staying at level 1 keeps them from ever realizing their potential and fulfilling their purpose for living. Its kind of like a

healthy person with the ability to work, living on welfare. People who stay here soon develop a sense of entitlement, they become lazy and when they get ground beef instead of T-bone steak, they become complainers and say things like, “I’m not being fed.”

So, do not homestead on level 1! There’s so much more and the benefits grow with every level.

Level 2: *Repent & Forgive* coming soon.

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